have also agreed to extend crop loans upto a maximum of Rs. 50 lakhs at 9% interest so as to benefit the coffee growers having land holdings upto 60 hectares.

Both Tea and Coffee Boards are also implementing a number of developmental schemes during the Tenth Five Year Plan for enhancing productivity, quality and marketability of these commodities produced in the country. Government has also reduced the import duty on items of machinery used to improve productivity and quality of tea and coffee to an all inclusive rate of 5%.

The Tea and Coffee Boards also support some welfare programmes and activities for the benefit of the workers and their dependants in areas like education, health care etc.

The measures taken to boost the system of marketing of tea include implementation of an IT based Information Dissemination Plan for the tea industry, including conversion of manual auction centres into electronic auction centres which is expected to improve the efficiency of the tea purchase systems and reduce transaction time and costs. Tea and Coffee Boards are also taking a number of measures for market development such as implementation of a medium term export strategy, participation in major trade fairs/exhibitions abroad, generic promotion efforts through public relation campaigns etc.

Government of India has launched the Technology Mission on Cotton (TMC) in February, 2000 to address the issues of raising productivity, improving quality and reducing the cost of production for providing the much needed competitive advantage to the textile industry alongwith ensuring attractive returns to the farmers. The Mission consists of 4 Mini Missions. These Mini Missions relate to improvement in marketing infrastructure and include the revival of dormant market yards, improvement in existing market yards and setting up of new market yards. These also aim at modernization of ginning and pressing factories thereby improving the quality of cotton by reducing contamination, ensuring better prices to growers.

Export target for 2004-05

1566. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the estimated export target for the year 2004-05, how much export earnings have accrued in the last three quarters of this finanical year;

(b) whether the commodity-wise/service-wise earning are according to the targets fixed or there are areas which are lagging behind; and

(c) whether export projection councils have suggested any new strategies to be followed in the year 2005-06?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E V K S ELANGOVAN) (a) An export target of 16% in dollar terms has been fixed for the year 2004-05 It is expected that India's exports may cross US$ 75 billion during the current financial year India's exports were valued at US$ 53 50 billion during the first three quarters of the financial year 2004-05.

(b) Overall targets were fixed for merchandise exports and not for services Sectoral performance has been as projected for most sectors barring Agricultural and allied products, Project goods and Textile exports

(c) Suggestions for new strategies have been invited from Export Promotion Councils, Chambers of Commerce, Trade Associations, Stake Holders, etc. for consideration while finalising the annual supplement to the Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) for 2005-06.

FDI in branded and dedicated retail sector

1567. DR. T SUBBARAMI REDDY.
SHRIMATI JAMANA DEVI BARUPAL

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state

(a) whether Government is planning to allow Foreign Direct Investment in branded and dedicated retail segments to boost investment in employment generating sectors;

(b) if so, whether FDI in the sectors, in which existing employment scenario will get distressed, is not likely to be considered;

(c) if so, what are areas where the Government has agreed to increase FDI; and

(d) to what extent Government has been able to get FDI improved in those projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) to (d) At present there is no proposal before the Government for decision on allowing FDI in the retail trade sector. However, the matter is being widely discussed by all stakeholders.